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VA Secretary Praises Congress for Extending Choice Program

Calls legislation major step toward increasing access to care

WASHINGTON — Today, following the U.S. Senate's passage by unanimous consent this week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation that extends the Veterans Choice Program (VCP) until the funding dedicated to the program is exhausted. The VCP is a critical program that increases access to care for millions of Veterans. Without this legislation, the ability to use VCP funding would have ended abruptly on Aug. 7 of this year. Secretary of Veterans Affairs [Dr. David J. Shulkin](#) released the following statement of support:

"Congress has once again demonstrated that the country stands firmly united when it comes to supporting our nation's Veterans," Secretary Shulkin said. "The Department of Veterans Affairs truly appreciates the quick bipartisan resolution Congress provided with the extension of the Veterans Choice Program.

"I want to thank Chairman Johnny Isakson, Ranking Member Jon Tester, Chairman Phil Roe, Ranking Member Tim Walz and all the members of our committees for their leadership as we continue to make improvements to increase Veterans' access to care," Secretary Shulkin continued. "I also want to thank Senator John McCain, who has championed choice for Veterans and whose work on this issue allowed for swift and successful resolution.

"VA looks forward to continued bipartisan support as we partner with Congress to not only develop a long-term solution for community care, but also work toward other critical legislation, such as accountability and appeals modernization to ensure Veterans receive the highest quality of care, benefits and support they have earned."

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